

First of all, I tried to call KOVR in Sacramento, CA, to comment on the negative use of public time and airways for unbalanced programming, especially regarding interrupting regular programs for strictly anti-Kerry publicity. I was put into a roundabout button-pushing session, ending with the dial tone. This is absurd and says something about the station management.

My comments are about the potential use of propaganda by Big Media, the ownership of way too many media stations. This is how Hearst and others created yellow journalism. So much media should not be owned by so few, as in dictatorships. Democracy requires discipline and honesty, rather than vindictive rumor-mongering. The FCC must require that Sinclair be responsible for the balance of free thought. This is, after all, a country that must show the world that we are a true democracy of many ideas and ideals. That's what makes us strong.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.